



# SET HOUSE RULES AND REDUCE CRASH RISKS FOR YOUR TEEN

Parents play a crucial role in teen driving safety, according to recent research. Teens who say their parents set rules and pay attention to their activities in a helpful, supportive way are half as likely to be in a crash. A teen driver's greatest lifetime chance of crashing occurs in the first six to 12 months after receiving a license.

That's why driving privileges need to be increased gradually. Teens require adult-supervised practice driving even after licensure for challenging situations such as highways or bad weather. Parents and teens need to work together to set clear rules for driving without adult supervision. Be sure to discuss how teens can demonstrate experience and maturity to earn new privileges. Let them know the consequences of not following the rules.

## Set these permanent driving safety rules:

- **Use seat belts on every trip — driver and all passengers.**
- **Do not use cell phones or other electronic devices while driving.**  
*Help your teen follow this rule by setting the example: complete calls before car is in gear, get directions in advance, check in only after arrival, and pull over for urgent calls.*
- **Follow all driving laws, including no speeding.**
- **Do not drive while impaired (drugged, drowsy or drunk) or ride as a passenger with an impaired driver.**  
*Help your teen follow this rule by offering other ways to get home.*
- **Do not ride with an unlicensed or inexperienced teen driver.**  
*Help your teen follow this rule by providing rides.*

## Set these initial limits to driving privileges:

- **No peer passengers.**
  - Start: Only adult passengers.
  - Include siblings as passengers after first six months of driving only if they are properly restrained.
- **No nighttime driving.**
  - Start: Only in daylight.
  - Gradually increase driving curfew after practicing driving at night with your teen, obeying your state's maximum limit.

- **No high-speed roads.**
  - Start: Only on low-volume, low-speed, familiar roads.
  - Gradually add more difficult roads after practicing together.
- **No driving in bad weather.**
  - Start: Only in fair weather driving conditions.
  - Gradually allow driving in more difficult conditions, such as light rain or snow, after practicing with your teen.
- **Control the keys.**
  - Start: Teen needs to ask for the keys (even for own vehicle).
  - Gradually increase amount teen can drive after first six months and being responsible.

## Other Tips

- **Pay attention.** Keep the lines of communication open. Know where they're going and why and discuss how they will get there and when they will be home. Provide alternatives, such as rides.
- **It's about safety, not control.** Make sure your teens understand that these rules come from love and because you want to keep them safe. As their skills develop and they demonstrate responsibility, introduce new privileges.
- **Lead by example.** Always wear a seat belt. Don't talk on a cell phone while driving. Don't speed. Follow the rules of the road.

Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for adolescents. Teen drivers (ages 16 to 19) are involved in fatal crashes at four times the rate of adult drivers (ages 25 to 69). Most of these crashes are preventable. That's why The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm® have joined to develop tools that will help families reduce the risk of teens being involved in a serious crash.

*This page may be reproduced exclusively for not-for-profit education and for use by CHOP and State Farm.*

Learn the facts and get advice about teen driver safety at  
[www.chop.edu/youngdrivers](http://www.chop.edu/youngdrivers) and [www.statefarm.com/teendriving](http://www.statefarm.com/teendriving).

 The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia®  
Hope lives here.

